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January 25, 1980

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MEMORANDUM

TO: D - Mr. Christopher

FROM: S/R - Frank E. Loy *FL*

SUBJECT: Assistance to Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

The purpose of this memorandum is to bring you up to date on our present and planned assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan. This memorandum does not deal with assistance funded through development, economic support funds, or military assistance accounts.

It is our present intention to channel substantially all our aid through UNHCR -- using cash, food or other commodities that may be needed, such as clothing, tents, medicines, etc. I believe we can get substantial visibility and an understanding of the U.S. origin of contributions, by use of in-kind contributions. Most of these can be marked with some U.S. identification and can be contributed with some fanfare.

We also expect to use a small amount of money to help voluntary relief agencies with gifts.

The UNHCR Effort

The UNHCR has issued an appeal for \$25 million in food and \$30 million in non-food assistance. In response to this appeal, we have contributed, through the WFP, over 17,000 tons of PL-480 Title II food valued at \$6.1 million dollars (including freight). The Secretary has also forwarded to the President a request that he

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approve a Presidential Determination releasing \$5.3 million in refugee emergency funds for this effort. Five million dollars of this amount are to be contributed to UNHCR as follows:

- \$1 million - initially announced cash contribution to UNHCR
- \$2 million - deferred contribution to UNHCR. We are looking for specific programs of in-kind assistance (Some examples are described below). In the event we cannot find suitable in-kind contributions in a 3-4 week period, we will contribute the \$2 million -- or remaining portion -- to the High Commissioner.

Rupee Contributions

In addition to these food and cash contributions to the UNHCR, we also plan to provide up to \$5 million in U.S.-held local currencies. We need the approval of the Government of Pakistan for this. We have asked for it via Ambassador Hummel, but have not yet received a response. We will use these rupees to purchase critically needed items available in Pakistan. Some of these items will be channeled through the UNHCR; others could be made available directly to the GOP for their use in refugee camps. The UNHCR estimates that its rupee denominated expenses may total \$8-10 million. We have not yet identified specific local items that both make sense in terms of need and are available in sufficient quantity.

Specific Possible Uses of Funds for In Kind Assistance through UNHCR

The use of emergency refugee funds and local currency provides us with opportunities to have the kind of impact associated with bilateral relief assistance. We are now examining the UNHCR requirements list to determine which items we could purchase and channel through the UNHCR or make available directly to the GOP. The UNHCR reports that it needs 120,000 blankets or quilts. We have located 117,000 blankets with American markings. They must be airlifted from Utah. The shipment does not appear to be

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very cost effective because of the cost of transport. For this reason we are planning at present to ship only one planeload of about 15,000 blankets at a cost of approximately \$12 per blanket. We have also located some tents with U.S. markings -- now located in Italy and Singapore. These could be airlifted to Pakistan. However, the same concerns with cost effectiveness are present.

In addition, based upon lessons most recently learned from the Thai/Kampuchea border relief effort, we feel that channeling assistance through American voluntary agencies will help ensure that needs are met. We have reserved \$300,000 from the Emergency Fund draw-down for this purpose, and have committed \$127,000 of that to reimburse Church World Service for the transportation cost of shipping last Saturday (the 19th) a planeload of medicines, blankets and clothing.

Obviously we do not have enough information yet to spend intelligently all the funds we are earmarking for in-kind assistance. In order to get a better fix on the needs, and the way in which USG resources can be best used to meet these needs, I will leave tomorrow (meeting with UN officials in Geneva on the way) to make an on-site assessment of the situation along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. I will be accompanied by two members of my own staff -- including an expert in disaster assistance -- plus a physician from the Center for Disease Control.

S/R:CRH(lms):jsv

Clearance: NEA/PAB:TSchaffer^{TS}

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